(b) whether the Lal Bahadur Rastriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth has made any proposal to the Ministry in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Attendance criteria for board examinations

2196. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether CBSE has issued a circular to the schools that students not having 75 per cent attendance will not be eligible for 10th and 12th standards Board Examinations this academic year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it was not issued before starting of schools in July, if so, whether it would seriously affect students who had availed more holidays for sickness, social functions, *etc.*; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to protect students' interests including setting aside the said circular or reducing compulsory attendance to 65-70 per cent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) and (b) Rule 13.1 (i) of CBSE's Examination Bye-Laws, states that candidates should have 75% of attendance in the classes held: counted from the day of commencement of teaching of classes IX/X/XI/XII as the case may be upto the 1st of the month preceding the month in which the examination of the School/Board commences. As per this rule, Heads of institutions shall not allow a candidate to take examination(s) unless the candidate fulfills the attendance requirement as given in this Rule. CBSE *vide* its circular dated 22.9.2008, has reiterated this provision to Heads of its affiliated Schools.

(c) and (d) This is an existing provision of the CBSE Examination Bye-Laws. It was reiterated by CBSE through a circular dated 22.9.2008. If any student has availed of leave on account of sickness, shortage upto 15% can be considered for condonation by the Chairman of CBSE on the recommendation of the Principal of the school.

Agitation against NCERT syllabus in Kerala

2197. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an agitation in Kerala by Thirusur Diocese of Catholic Church on the one side and 12 leaders of Muslim Organisations on the other, against the syllabus (2007) prescribed by NCERT;

(b) if so, what is the effect and the fate of the prescribed syllabus; and

(c) the preventive and curative measures taken to avert such situations in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) Government is not aware of any such agitation in Kerala against syllabi prepared by National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT). State of Kerala has its own syllabi and textbooks for school education, and does not follow NCERT syllabi.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Encouragement of fundamental sciences

2198. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of heavy investment in higher education in the Eleventh Five Year Plan to make it basically a knowledge investment plan, Government has taken any steps to encourage fundamental sciences like mathematics and physics at degree and post graduate level in every college, as large number of college students in the country are not opting for these fundamental sciences, which would create a crisis in future in the teaching faculty at high school, graduate and post graduate level and in the fundamental science research field as scientific advancement of the world has not taken place without the advancement of these basic fundamental sciences;

(b) if so, the details of steps taken in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) According to the University Grants Commission, the percentage of students' enrolment in Science subjects in universities and colleges during the year 2006-07 was 20.45% which is only lower than that in Art discipline which was 45.13% . In order to promote basic scientific research in universities, a Task Force under the Chairmanship of Prof. M.M. Sharma was constituted by the Central Government. The Task Force has been converted to an Empowered Committee to implement its recommendations. The University Grants Commission has been advised that while releasing grant-in-aid to the institutes of higher learning, 20% of the grant may be earmarked exclusively for research related activities.

Opening of IIMs and NITs in Uttarakhand and Western Uttar Pradesh

2199. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to open new IIMs and National Institutes of Technology in Uttarakhand and Western Uttar Pradesh;

(b) whether the Uttarakhand Government has proposed any locations for these institutes;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the locations for setting up these institutes have been finalized;